August 28th, 1797.

I stumbled yesterday on the finest inland view I ever saw in my life—(you will say I am like the cat and the mouse in the fable). We set off early to take a long walk into an unexplored country, and accordingly stretched through the forest till we reached the three leagues' stone. There we sat down to our breakfast of bread and a pear, basking in the sun. We then wandered on the banks of the Loire and the Canal de Briare, peeped into a grand chateau where Nature did much, and art has undone everything. A large rocky stream runs through the woods and gardens, and the tasty owner has trained it up in a triangular pond and a moat round the house, and for its discharge has placed two horrid falling mills in the garden, at the edge of the stone head. We rambled up the high hills that run between the Seine and Loire, and returned to a full view of Moret, near an ancient mound, probably of Roman work. From thence the view was divine; the distant hills of the Orleannois bounding

the horizon, the Loire meandering
like a snake
through a long reach of meadows; on
each side
gentle eminences and villages,
with clumps of
poplars; and in a bold semicircle of hills
the large